

Ms. Susie V. Castillo, Board Member

Co-Sponsor: Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

SUBJECT: COUNSELOR ALLOCATION

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL SERVICES AND STUDENT AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: HIGHLY EFFECTIVE LEADERS, TEACHERS, AND STAFF

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) are committed to provide educational excellence for all. We provide the highest quality education, ensuring that we foster an environment that serves all students and aspires to eliminate the achievement gap. An integral and central part of the District's total educational program are school support services. As a result, every school has a student services team.

The school counselor is a member of the student services team which is responsible for assisting students in developing their potential to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. The counselor facilitates the acquisition of competencies by students in the areas of personal and social growth, educational development, and career guidance through the implementation of the standards set forth by the school district.

Historically, M-DCPS has made its spending decisions guided by its principles of focusing on student achievement while also maintaining its commitment to fiscally sound decisions and protecting an effective workforce and taxpayer interests. In keeping with those principles, 95.2% of the District's resources are spent on school level services. However, as budgets have become increasingly tighter, school counselors have often been some of the first positions to be eliminated.

In 2016-2017, the School Support Allocation Pool is established for schools based on each school's FY 2010-2011 allocations. Currently the counselor ratio in the School Support Allocation Pool is one counselor for every 510 full-time equivalent (FTE) students in K-8 centers, middle schools and senior high schools; and one counselor for each 900 FTE in elementary schools. The American School Counselor Association recommends a student-to-counselor ratio of 250 to 1.

As we develop a budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, it is vital to review counselor allocations as part of this process to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our students. When reviewing our counselor allocations we should also consider making counselor positions a non-discretionary allocation.

ACTION PROPOSED B

MS. SUSIE V. CASTILLO:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

- 1) Review and identify any recommendations for an improvement in student-to-counselor ratios underlying the School Support Pool at all grade levels in our Student Allocation Plan; and
- 2)
- 3) Encourage Principals to purchase their counselor allocations; and
- 4) Report back to the Board by the November 2017 Board Meeting.

REVISED